

# WILMINGTON 2014-15 Progress Report

CITY OF WILMINGTON PUBLIC INFORMATION REPORT

Winter 2016: Special Progress Report

## Check inside

Learn more about major projects completed last year and find out what's coming up this year.



## Your city at work: *By the numbers*

Each year, the city's 1,000 employees provide a variety of services to help maintain the community and keep it safe. These services are paid for with property tax dollars, user fees and state funding. Following is some information that illustrates what citizens received for their money in fiscal year 2015 as well as projects coming up this year.

## Wilmington at-a-glance

**City population, 2014:**  
113,657

**Median age, 2014:** 34.6

**Gender, 2014:**  
Female 52.4%  
Male 47.6%

**Race 2014:**  
71.9% White  
19.3% Black  
3% American Indian/  
Asian/Other  
5.8% Hispanic

**City land area:**  
52.9 square miles

**8th largest city in NC  
(population)**

Source: US Census Bureau, American FactFinder

### Public Safety

- WPD-189,494 annual calls for service
- WFD-12,903 response calls

### Streets

- Lane-miles of roadways maintained: 800
- Miles of sidewalks maintained: 439
- Potholes repaired: 5,963

### Solid Waste

- Trash picked up: 23,193 tons (46,386,520 lbs.)
- Recycling picked up: 6,294 tons (12,588,000 lbs.)
- Yard waste picked up: 11,580 tons (23,160,600 lbs.)

### Stormwater

- 46 miles of ditches cleaned (manual)
- 343 bi-annual private retention pond inspections
- 2,861 tons of street sweeping debris collected
- 9,650 miles of streets swept
- 201 storm pipe cave-in repairs

### Parks & Landscaping

- 443 acres public parks (41 public parks)
- 21 acres of landscaped areas and greenways (18 locations)
- 300 acres of athletic, recreational facilities
- More than 9 acres of city-owned lots (24 locations)
- Approximately 71 miles of rights-of-way (107 locations) within the city
- Approximately 66 miles of rights-of-way (28 locations) for the NCDOT
- Approximately 13 miles of 127 alley locations
- Approximately 5 miles of medians (17 locations)
- 24 traffic speed reduction devices
- 55 dog waste stations throughout the city
- 35 playground units
- 254 trees planted

### Traffic Engineering

- 9,226 streetlights
- 214 traffic signals
- 61 Miles of cable for traffic signal system
- 19,000 street and traffic signs



## 2014-2015 Improvements *At a glance*

### Riverfront Park/Water Street

Phase I of the Water Street – Riverfront Park Improvement project is now underway. The year-long phase of the multi-year project involves bulkhead repair, handicap access, and extensive streetscape improvements in Riverfront Park and at the foot of Market Street. It also involves drainage work at the foot of Princess Street and CFPWA replacement of water and sewer mains in the same area. Additional improvements, including those directly in front of the Federal Building, will be completed in a future phase after the US Coast Guard obtains funding for repair of their portion of the bulkhead. This \$6.3 million project will be completed in three phases over the next several years.



### Street improvements from 5-year Plan

More than 50 lane-miles of city streets have been repaved since 2012 as part of the city's \$41 million, 5-year plan to make repairs and improvements to streets and other public facilities. Greenville Loop Road, Covil Avenue and a portion of Pine Grove, Racine and College Acres drives were all completed last year.

### Long-range growth plan complete

After gathering extensive public input, the city has completed a new comprehensive long-range growth plan, ready for consideration for adoption by City Council. The new plan is designed to help deal with population growth and demographic changes that will change the face of the city over the next 20 years. In addition to official adoption of the draft plan, 2016 will see the start of a multi-year process to replace the city's outdated land development regulations. You can read the entire document at [www.createwilmington.com](http://www.createwilmington.com).



### Northern Riverwalk

An 1100-foot section of new Riverwalk, running from just north of the new marina to the existing section that runs to the Isabel Holmes Bridge, was completed in 2015. This section will be easily accessible to the public once the two restaurants (currently under construction just north of the new marina) are completed later this year.

### New LED lights

The city has just finished converting approximately 120 streetlights downtown to environmentally-friendly LED lights, which save thousands of dollars each year in energy costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The city plans to convert more than 8,000 streetlights over the next few years, including those located in city parks. So far, more than 2,500 streetlights have been converted.

### Convention Center Hotel

2016 will see the much-anticipated construction of a 186-room, full service Embassy Suites Hotel next to the Wilmington Convention Center. This follows on the heels of the courts ruling in favor to the city's response to a protracted legal challenge. The \$33.6 million privately owned hotel will include a full-service restaurant, bar, pool and additional meeting space.

### InnovateNC

The city and other local entities were one of five NC cities to be selected for the "InnovateNC" program. This is a two-year project designed to foster a creative, innovative environment similar to Research Triangle Park. The local group was awarded \$250,000 in in-kind services as a result of being selected.

## 2014-2015 Stormwater drainage improvements *At a glance*

2015 saw the completion of several drainage projects, all designed to alleviate localized flooding. These include:

- \$390,000 Lincoln Outfall project to help prevent flooding in the Lincoln Forest neighborhood;
- \$380,000 Rogersville Road culvert;
- \$1.2 million Inland Greens drainage project.





## 2014-2015 Public Safety Improvements *At a glance*

### Police youth engagement

The Wilmington Police Department continues to embrace proactive community policing in an effort to reduce crime and improve community relations. Officers interact with youth through athletic, recreational, charitable and intervention type programs while building trust and changing the lives of young people. Some of the programs that were active in 2015 included:

- P.A.L. (Police Activities League), offering after-school basketball, soccer and wrestling, as well as Saturday night teen programming;
- Santa Cop, where police take under-privileged youth shopping for Christmas with money from public donations;
- Cop Camp, a week-long summer program that teaches kids about police work;
- U-Turn Project, a community initiative created to encourage positive choices through mentors; and
- Boots on the Ground, a faith-based program responsible for prayer walks and mentorships in troubled neighborhoods.

For more information, call 343-3945.



### Cinema Drive Fire Station

WFD's newest station opened in the fall of 2015 on Cinema Drive. The 14,000 square-foot station replaces older stations on Princess Place Drive and Wallace Avenue. The new \$3.4 million station has four bays, whereas most existing stations only have two or three, and also includes a community room for meetings and training. The Cinema Drive location is part of an overall system that strategically locates new stations and upgrades older facilities to provide the citizens of Wilmington with the same level of service along with the ability to accommodate newer, larger fire trucks. Construction on another station on Shipyard Boulevard which will replace two other aging stations is expected to begin later this year.

## 2014-2015 Service Improvements *At a glance*

### Gary Shell Cross-City Trail nears completion

2015 marked the completion of a 1.3-mile segment of trail from John D. Barry Drive to Wade Park, including signalized crosswalks at 17th Street/John D. Barry Drive and at the 17th Street/College Road intersection.



### City's financial outlook strong

- Balanced budget with increased savings
- 5¢ of city tax rate dedicated for \$41 million 5-year infrastructure improvement plan
- 2¢ of city tax rate dedicated to streets & sidewalks projects approved in 2014 Transportation Bond
- Wilmington's debt rate low compared to other NC cities
- Upgraded bond rating to AAA due to good financial condition

CITY'S SAVINGS ACCOUNT



### Solid Waste

18 new solid waste trucks joined the city's fleet in 2015, replacing older, less reliable trucks. In addition, the city began curbside pickup of electronics for city trash customers. The city now picks up electronics on Mondays and Thursdays each week by appointment.



### Transportation Bond

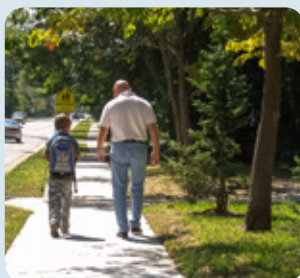
The city has been busy working to get several voter-approved transportation bond projects underway, and 13 projects are now actively under design. Some of the projects that will break ground in 2016 include:

- Barclay Hills area/N. 23rd Street sidewalks
- Dawson/Wooster streetscape and 8th Street crosswalks
- South College Road Trail
- Wilshire Boulevard crosswalks (at Kerr Avenue & College Road)

Two other significant projects are moving forward in the design phase-

- Love Grove additional access
- Carolina Beach Road streetscape

The city hopes to complete all 38 bond projects within the next 5-7 years.



### 41<sup>st</sup> Street improvement project

Crews have begun a \$1.6 million project to repave 41st Street between Oleander Drive and Shipyard Boulevard. Approximately three lane-miles will be paved, and trees lining the road between Abbingdon Terrace and Shipyard Boulevard will be replaced. In addition, curbs and gutters damaged by the tree roots will be repaired.

### Multi-use trails

In addition to the bond projects, the city will construct new multi-use trails at these locations in 2016:

- The eastern end of the Gary Shell Cross-City Trail, stretching from the intersection of Wrightsville Avenue and Eastwood Road to the Heide Trask Drawbridge to Wrightsville Beach. This will connect trail users to the commercial area on Airle Road, as well as provide access to existing walkways on both sides of the drawbridge;
- Hinton Avenue from Park Avenue to Greenville Avenue;
- Hooker Road from Wrightsville Avenue to Rose Avenue/Mallard Street;
- Park Avenue from Empie Park to Kerr Avenue;
- Beginning of work to complete the Gary Shell Cross-City Trail along Randall Parkway through the intersection with Kerr Avenue as part of the NCDOT project to widen Kerr Avenue. Completion is expected in 2017.

### Stormwater projects

Several projects are currently underway or will get underway in 2016, all aimed at alleviating localized flooding during heavy rains, as well as improving the water quality of the runoff entering local creeks. Projects include:

- South Branch of Bradley Creek/Michelle Drive - This \$3.8 million project is nearing completion. The project involved replacing major stormwater drainage systems in the area and stream restoration for part of the south branch of Bradley Creek.
- The \$5.4 million, two-phase Wisteria Lane/Clearbrook project began in August and the first phase is slated for completion this year. It will alleviate flooding, improve the city's ability to perform stormwater maintenance in the area and improve water quality of the runoff entering Hewletts Creek.
- The \$4 million Brookshire/Beasley project is expected to start this year. A large culvert has already been installed under Waltmoor Drive for this project when a section of the Cross-City Trail was constructed in the area.
- The \$9.6 million Clear Run Branch project will be one of the largest drainage improvement projects the city has ever done. This is a two-phase, multi-year project that will eventually help flooding on New Centre Drive.



### Water Street deck redevelopment

The city is finalizing negotiations on a multi-million dollar redevelopment of the site of the obsolete Water Street parking deck. Plans call for a mixed use development that will include private and public parking, residential units and retail, as well as opening up Chestnut Street and Bijou Park to pedestrian traffic and providing better connectivity to Front Street.



### Inland Greens Golf Course

With needed drainage work and multi-use paths now complete, the next \$700,000 phase of the project is expected to begin this spring and will include a nine-hole par-3 golf course, landscaping, parking lot, building upgrades, a playground and other amenities.